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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Lithuanian SSR)

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SUBJECT Port of Klaipeda

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
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SOURCE:

1. On 19 September 1953, the Soviet pilot and two guards, wearing olive-green uniforms, green cap bands, and green collar patches, boarded informant's ship near Klaipeda leading buoy. The three men spoke good German.
2. Informant noticed a wooden watchtower with a glass-enclosed lookout room, and a platform with two sentries. The watchtower was located on the south side of the entrance to the land tongue separating the lagoon. Some unidentifiable object projected over the railing of the platform. Another canvas-covered object, which informant believed was a searchlight, was located at the foot of the watchtower.
3. Railroad tracks ran parallel to the river bank between the new harbor and the first third of the north jetty. There were twelve railroad coal cars, each of which was equipped with a gun and was guarded by a sentry wearing a blue naval uniform, at the foot of the jetty. The cars were coupled to a locomotive, painted green, which was at the townward end of the train. The locomotive was under steam. Informant believed that the railroad guns were antiaircraft guns of about 100 millimeters, with a barrel length of about four meters. He believed the guns could also be used against floating targets. The breechblocks on the guns were fitted at about shoulder level, and each gun had a gunlayer's seat. Informant could not determine the purpose of the position of the guns, because no tracks were observed as far as the head of the jetty. The sea area could not be observed from the guns. A Lithuanian crane operator stated that trains of this type were presently needed for the protection of railroad lines in the Lithuanian SSR.
4. The three rearmost railroad cars observed near the north jetty had guns in square turrets. Their barrels had an estimated length of between 3.5 to 4 meters and their caliber was between 120 and 130 millimeters. The gun barrels tapered off toward the muzzle and the guns had no muzzle brakes. A "Dove of Peace" was painted on the side of the guns.

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5. About 500 meters of the embankment at the former fishing harbor at Commune Bonnels Vitte had been revetted with new sheet pilings. The pier was guarded by several sentries, posted about 50 meters apart; the guards wore olive-green uniforms and were armed with submachine guns. Five steel-hulled PT boats, about 35 meters long, were berthed alongside the pier. Each boat was equipped with a 30 to 40-mm gun on the foredeck, and with two torpedo tubes with muzzles pointing forward. Each boat was guarded by one naval sentry armed with a rifle. At about 1900 hours on 19 September 1953, the boats departed.

6. [redacted] No liberty was granted. This coal developed enormous heat and left white ashes. Some of the longshoremen and crane operators were Lithuanians, who seemed to be rather depressed. They spoke good German, when no Soviet was present.

7. Six naval vessels and a two-masted schooner were tied up to the dolphins opposite the railroad cars, about one kilometer downstream from the harbor, on the east bank of the river. The vessels were about 25 meters long, and each one had a light gun with a protective shield on the foredeck. On the fantail there was a canvas-covered drum, about 1.5 meters in diameter. The vessels were painted gray-green, and they were marked with a letter followed by a number. They, as well as the schooner, flew the Soviet naval ensign.

8. [redacted] 150 meters long, which was located outside the fishing harbor; the pier had iron sheet pilings with concrete (sic). Three large 10-ton gantry cranes with 7-ton grabs, and four smaller cranes were available. A dispatch note, which a ship's officer found on the pier when reading the draft marks, indicated that the anthracite taken on by the ship came from the Donets Basin in 50-ton cars. Longshoremen stated that the asphalt coating on the upper layer of the coal on the cars was to prevent thefts during the journey. Several workers reloaded the asphalt into empty cars. At 1700 hours on 19 September 1953, informant's ship tied up to the pier, and at 0000 hours on 20 September, it left port after taking on 2,300 tons of coal during an actual loading time of six hours.

9. Informant saw extensive building operations, including the erection of large ropeway pillars, similar to those used for cableways at the Stuelcken Shipyard in Hamburg. New sheet pilings were observed on the east side of the river, downstream from the ship's loading berth. Three pile drivers were still in operation between the foot of the jetty and the finished quay wall.

10. At 1030 hours on 20 September 1953, between Klaipeda and Brusterort Light, (approximately N 54-57, E 19-58) naval units were observed executing formation exercises. M-type minesweepers proceeded at slow speeds and encircled PT boats. Three aircraft, apparently single-engine piston aircraft, also took part in the maneuver.

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